

Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission Meeting

March 21, 2016 / 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Maryland Historical Trust
First Floor Conference Rooms A and B
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032**

Meeting Summary

Members Present:

Susan Summers, David R. Craig, Greg Bowen, Richard Brush, David Caporale, Deborah Carpenter, Charlotte Davis, Devon Dobson, Jeffrey Felker, Howard Freedlander, Charles Glass, Frank Hertsch, James Kruger, Sandi Olek, Kevin Small, Lee Sobel, Eric Soter, Bryce Turner, Leo Vondas, Jessica Zuniga, and Uri Avin representing Garrett Knapp.

Attendees:

Marty Baker

MDP Staff:

Wendi Peters, Brandon Wright, Linda Janey, Chuck Boyd, Kristen Mitchell, Monica Phelan, and Emily Tocknell

Welcome and Opening Remarks

David Craig welcomed members and guests to the meeting and initiated a round of introductions. The new Chair, Susan Summers, thanked everyone for attending and began the meeting by asking for any announcements.

Chuck Boyd informed the Commission, with its recent set of appointments in place, the process of reviewing the 2016 Sustainable Growth Award nominations will begin shortly. He asked for those members willing to volunteer for the Selection Committee to contact him.

Sandi Olek provided the Commission a brief update on the Education Workgroup's efforts to evaluate the Sustainable Challenge College Student award submission. A full update of the review and selection process can be found in the Education Workgroup's Status Report.

Review of Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission Charge and Past Activities

Chuck Boyd provided the Commission a general orientation presentation that:

- highlighted the origins of the Commission in the work of the Task Force on the Future of Growth and Development;
- reviewed the Commission's charge and the adopted 12 Visions;
- described the organizational structure the Commission has used to conduct work assignments; and
- summarized the many Commission's accomplishments over the past five years.

Moving forward, Mr. Boyd suggested that the Commission may want to conduct a survey of its members to identify what the Commission's priority concerns may be and if there are any changes needed in the workgroup structure. Following a brief discussion of the members, there was general consensus that staff should develop and administer a survey of the Commission members. Mr. Boyd stated that staff would

prepare and conduct a preference survey of the Commission members and have the results ready for discussion at the May meeting.

Briefing on Reinvest Maryland

Kristen Mitchell briefed the Commission on the Reinvest Maryland initiative. She described the research of existing programs that went into the Reinvest Maryland effort. She pointed out that there was a fairly extensive outreach of public, private and nonprofit representatives from communities throughout the state to discuss their successes and challenges related to infill, redevelopment and revitalization. Ms. Mitchell noted that the Reinvest Maryland report highlights a number of observations that should be addressed and contains a series of recommendations. Planning staff has developed a Reinvest Maryland Toolbox that lists over 100 federal and state programs that support infill, redevelopment and community revitalization in Maryland.

Deborah Carpenter stated that she supported many of the recommendations listed in the Reinvestment Maryland report, but noted that how these efforts are implemented locally will vary based on the priorities and challenges facing a community. Ms. Carpenter encouraged moving forward with these recommendations. Several other members of the Commission expressed their support for moving forward with the Reinvest Maryland effort and interest in participating in the reassessment of the report.

Ms. Mitchell concluded by stating that staff would begin to develop a work plan on next steps to implement the Reinvest Maryland effort.

Commission Discussion on Areas of Interest and Future Endeavors

Ms. Summers opened up the discussion to the Commission members on what issues of interest they would like the Growth Commission pursue, in addition to the Reinvest Maryland effort.

Sandi Olek pointed out that the Department of Natural Resources leads the **Maryland Partnership for Children and Nature effort**. Ms. Olek noted there may be opportunities for the Growth Commission to collaboratively work on some of these issues. The Partnership was created to ensure that every child in every community experiences nature directly and develops a personal connection with our environment. These outdoor experiences build a sense of stewardship so that our children learn the principles associated with being responsible guardians of Maryland's natural resources.

Greg Bowen stated that the Rural Economies Workgroup has been working on a number of different issues related to **promoting economic development and increasing viability of farming, forestry and fishing in the rural parts of Maryland**. He noted that the Workgroup has been looking into way to address state and local regulations that impede agriculture and forestry. Mr. Bowen highlighted the efforts of the Sustainable Forestry Subcommittee investigating the possibility of forest cooperatives that could improve the permitting of forest harvesting, similar to regulations of other agricultural activities. He also noted that one of the Rural Economies Workgroup's Subcommittees is focusing on local food production and distributions, and exploring how farmers can sell more of their produce locally and market to local restaurants.

Bryce Turner expressed support for the local food production/distribution effort, noting that he is seeing more interest from restaurants and markets to offer locally grown food.

Ms. Summers stated that she is very supportive of looking into ways to improve and strengthen the agricultural community.

Jessica Zuniga also expressed her support investigating the food production and distribution issue, as well as examining opportunities for greater education and marketing of local foods.

Howard Freedlander concurred in supporting the Rural Economies Workgroup efforts noting that the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy's "Town Projects" promotes the vibrancy of strong rural community as the commercial center for needs of farmers in the surrounding rural areas.

Eric Soter suggested the Commission may want to look into **State regulations in the area of stormwater management and forest conservation**, as there may be opportunities for regulatory relief and expanded economic development.

Frank Hertsch suggested the Commission continue to explore **the impact of local Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances (APFO) on economic development** and the potential triggering of moratoria on local development as result of APFO enforcement.

Ms. Summers charged everyone with the task to think of which workgroups they would like to work on or workgroups that should be started to address areas of their interest.

Workgroup Updates

- Education Workgroup – see handouts
- Rural Economies Workgroup Report – see handouts

Public Comments

None.

Chairwoman Summers adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.